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**THE SENATE
STATE OF MICHIGAN**

COMMITTEES:

APPROPRIATIONS:

HISTORY, ARTS, AND LIBRARIES (C)
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (VC)
HIGHER EDUCATION (VC)
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY
HEALTH
HEALTH POLICY (C)
MICHIGAN CAPITOL COMMITTEE (C)

Written testimony to Senate Judiciary Committee
Room 210—Farnum Building, 1:00 PM

Senator George's statement on Standish Prison Proposal

August 18, 2009

There has been discussion recently of the possibility of using the Standish Maximum Correctional Facility to house either inmates from other states, or enemy combatants currently incarcerated in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

While both of these options raise important questions regarding public safety, legal jurisdiction, and appropriate reimbursement to the state, none of these questions is unprecedented or insolvable. The Standish prison is a maximum security facility with an excellent safety record. There are legal precedents for housing federal inmates within Michigan, and it may be possible to negotiate a favorable intergovernmental agreement.

During WWII Michigan was the site of over a dozen P.O.W. camps.

We accounted for approximately 20% of America's armament production. The Ford Willow Run plant, which employed my grandfather, produced over 300,000 military aircraft. Other Michigan plants manufactured light, medium, and heavy tanks, tank destroyers, armored cars, amphibious vehicles, jeeps, aircraft engines, propellers, artillery shells, 12.5 billion rounds of small arms ammunition, and nearly six million guns. Despite the risks of making Michigan a military target, our citizens did not hesitate to aid the war effort.

Today the Standish facility is at real risk of closing due to our ongoing budget problems. The prison has been the largest employer in Arenac County, a county currently suffering a 17.3% unemployment rate. Michigan remains a donor state related to the allocation of federal dollars. Moreover, thousands of Michigan residents are currently serving in the armed forces protecting our nation in this time of conflict.

For all of these reasons, I encourage the governor to continue her discussions with other states and the federal government regarding possible uses for the Standish facility.